

Required Report - public distribution

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Aruba

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

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Report Highlights:

"Section(s) Updated: Section VIII, Appendix I & II."

Aruba is very receptive to U.S. products. At the present time, Aruba has no health regulations regarding imported foods. U.S. standards for food and agricultural products are fully accepted. Import licenses and permits are not required. However, meat products imported from the United States require a USDA export certificate. U.S. Exports of agricultural products to Aruba generally clear customs quite quickly and without obstacles.

Section I. Food Laws:

NOTE: This report was prepared for the Caribbean Basin Agricultural Trade Office of the

USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Miami, Florida, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate, either because policies have changed since its preparation or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF THE PRODUCT ENTRY.

Licenses or permits are not required to import food into Aruba. Agencies that receive, store and sell imported products must be registered with the Chamber of Commerce, membership in which is a government regulation. All imported meats must comply with USDA sanitary regulations. Any meat products from countries other than the United States that can pass USDA inspection are accepted in Aruba. A USDA meat inspection certificate with the corresponding stamp is required. The Veterinary Department performs random inspections.

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

Aruba has no labeling regulations. U.S. labels as well as labels from any other country are accepted. No additional information is required.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:

Aruba has no regulations on packaging.

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

According to the Health Department, the only additive forbidden is bromide. There are no further special requirements or restrictions. Authorities do not use the CODEX list.

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

Aruba has no regulations regarding pesticides and other contaminants.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:

Products are not required to be registered or laboratory tested at the time. Product samples shipped via express mail or parcel post are subject only to import regulations (i.e. customs duty). The addressee is responsible for the duty on sample and mail order shipments. Exporters should ensure that the addressee is informed of and agrees to accept the pending shipment to avoid it being returned at the cost of the exporter. Products are not monitored at the retail/wholesale level at this time. No import certification documents are required.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards:

Processed meat products with past due dates may be confiscated and destroyed by the Veterinary Service. With the cooperation of the importers, other meats which are spoiled or in an unhealthy state are turned over to authorities and destroyed. There are no quarantine laws for live animals. Health certificates from the state or local government agency of the exporting country must accompany the animals.

Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:

Aruba is a party to international agreements and treaties for the protection intellectual property, such as the Paris Convention, Nice Agreement, and the Vienna Agreement. Established in 1987,

the Bureau of Intellectual Property of Aruba implements the Aruba Trademark Act and is responsible for registering trademarks. Trademark registration is a rather simple procedure and is normally carried out by an agent authorized by the Bureau. Registration is for a 10 year period and is renewable for indeterminate periods of 10 years. Exclusive rights of use of a trademark are obtained through first use. Registration also gives exclusive rights of use but under current law it does not necessarily signify first use. Therefore, the Bureau is developing new legislation which will grant acquisition of exclusive rights of use through registration only. In other words, U.S. suppliers will need to register their trademarks to ensure exclusive rights. This new legislation is expected to take effect in late 2009 or early 2010. U.S. suppliers interested in registering trademarks may contact the Bureau for further information or to obtain a listing of authorized trademark agents (See Appendix I).

Section IX. Import Procedures:

Customs clearance is done by the importer or receiving agent who must be registered with Chamber of Commerce in order to do business in Aruba. Import documentation may be in English. After arrival at the port and shipments are approved (unopened), they are forwarded to the importer. Customs officers inspect the shipments on the premises where further documentation is presented. Duty is paid directly to the Department of Customs.

The length of time for the entire customs clearance procedure can vary widely. Perishable goods have priority and usually are cleared within one day. Dry goods can be cleared within two days. From mid-December to the end of the first week of January, customs handles only perishable goods. Customs does not work on holidays, after 5 p.m. or on weekends. The customs inspection is efficient and well-managed. The length of time for clearance depends on variable factors, such as, the number of container ships arriving at the same time, how quickly they can be unloaded and when they are transported to the importer. Containers may not be over 40 feet.

There is no “official” appeals system for disputed and/or rejected products. Disputes are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

FOR CUSTOMS PROCEDURES AND TARIFFS, CONTACT:

Customs Office
L.G. Smith Boulevard 84-88
Oranjestad, Aruba
Tel: 011 (297) 582-1800, 588-9147
Fax: 011 (297) 583-4367

FOR IMPORT REGULATIONS, CONTACT:

Food Control & Hygiene Office
Department of Public Health
Hospitalstraat 4
Oranjestad, Aruba
Tel: 011 (297) 582-3073

Fax: 011 (297) 588-4180

Veterinary Department

Veterinaire Dienst

Barcadera 1

Aruba

Tel: 011 (297) 585-0400

Fax: 011 (297) 585-1828

Email: vetservice@aruba.gov.aw

FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ISSUES, CONTACT:

Trademarks Division

Aruba Bureau of Intellectual Property

Adriaan Lacle Blvd. 3

Oranjestad, Aruba

T: 011 (297) 583-1200

F: 011 (297) 583-8773

E-mail: opi@aruba.gov.aw

Web: www.opi-aruba.org

The above website is provided for the reader's convenience; USDA does NOT in any way endorse, guarantee the accuracy of, or necessarily concur with the information contained in these websites.

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts:

U.S. Consulate General to the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba

P.O. Box 158, J.B. Gorsiraweg 1

Willemstad, Curacao

Tel: 011 (599-9) 461-3066

Fax: 011 (599-9) 461-6489

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